

Senate Resolution 626

By: Senator Douglas of the 17th

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending Lieutenant General Cuthbert A. "Bill" Pattillo, Major General Charles C.
2 "Buck" Pattillo, Major General Joel B. "Bill" Paris III, and Brigadier General John F."Big
3 John" Collins; and for other purposes.

4 WHEREAS, in 1946, Lieutenant General Cuthbert A. "Bill" Pattillo, Major General Charles
5 C. "Buck" Pattillo, Major General Joel B. "Bill" Paris III, and Brigadier General John F."Big
6 John" Collins founded the first State of Georgia Air National Guard Fighter Aircraft Wing,
7 the 54th Fighter Wing; and

8 WHEREAS, in 1946, "Big John" Collins was a National Guard Captain and the pilot of an
9 A-26 Douglas Aircraft Company low altitude two engine attack bomber; and

10 WHEREAS, during missions, identical twin brothers and First Lieutenants "Bill" and "Buck"
11 Pattillo flew in tight formation on the left and right wings of Collins' A-26 with National
12 Guard Captain "Bill" Paris taking position behind and under the bomber, completing what
13 is known as a "diamond" attack formation; and

14 WHEREAS, Brigadier General George G. Finch, the State of Georgia Deputy Adjutant
15 General for the Georgia Air National Guard, ordered this team of four exceptional pilots to
16 perform exercises at air shows around the State of Georgia to promote the armed forces and
17 boost enlistment in the Georgia National Guard; and

18 WHEREAS, due to the extraordinary performance of these four pilots, the air shows were
19 a brilliant success, significantly increasing recruitment and gaining the recognition of the
20 National Guard Bureau at U.S. Air Force Headquarters at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, with the enthusiastic support of Air Force Chief-of-Staff Hoyt Vandenberg, the
23 Georgia Air National Guard flight team became the foundation for the U.S. Air Force

1 "Thunderbird Precision Flying Team," a world-class team of pilots ranking alongside the
2 U.S. Air Force "Blue Angels Precision Flying Team"; and

3 WHEREAS, "Bill" and "Buck" Pattillo, "Bill" Paris, and "Big John" Collins were four of the
4 most decorated pilots serving during World War II, collectively earning an incredible number
5 of honors and medals, including four Silver Stars, nine Distinguished Flying Crosses, nine
6 Legion of Merit awards, 36 Air Medals, five Distinguished Service Medals, one Purple Heart,
7 three Commendation Medals, nine Presidential Unit Citations, four Government of the
8 Philippines awards, two Croix-de-Guerre with Palm awards, the US SWPA medal with nine
9 major campaign battle stars, 121 noncombat awards, and many other medals for outstanding
10 service; and

11 WHEREAS, Georgia contributed more than 324,000 of its men and women to serve during
12 the Second World War with more than 6,700 killed in action, over 11,000 wounded in action,
13 over 600 held as prisoners of war, and hundreds missing under unknown circumstances; and

14 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia and the United States will be forever indebted to the
15 inspiring bravery and perseverance of the thousands of heroic veterans from Georgia who
16 fought in the Pacific, in Europe, and around the globe during World War II; and

17 WHEREAS, as these four amazing pilots have brought honor to World War II veterans
18 across the nation and have earned the esteem of countless generations of Georgians, it is
19 abundantly fitting and proper to honor and salute them on this occasion.

20 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
21 commend these four outstanding pilots, Lieutenant General Cuthbert A. "Bill" Pattillo, Major
22 General Charles C. "Buck" Pattillo, Major General Joel B. "Bill" Paris III, and Brigadier
23 General John F. "Big John" Collins; recognize the immense service that they have provided
24 to Georgia and the United States; and heartily extend to them their sincerest best wishes for
25 their future health and fulfillment.

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
27 to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to Lieutenant General Cuthbert A. "Bill"
28 Pattillo, Major General Charles C. "Buck" Pattillo, Major General Joel B. "Bill" Paris III, and
29 Brigadier General John F. "Big John" Collins.